

Vocabulary Review

Name: _____

Date: _____

To help you understand the elements of the short story, review the important terms defined below:

✓ **Characterization:** The methods a writer uses to communicate information about characters to readers.

7. ✓ When the author tells the reader directly about a character, it is called **direct characterization**.

7. ✓ When the author shows the character in action and lets readers draw their own conclusions, it is called **indirect characterization**.

✓ **Climax** The moment when the action comes to its highest point of dramatic conflict. Most often, the climax occurs *before* the actual ending of the story.

Complication: Any obstacle that increases the tension of the story conflict.

✓ **Conflict:** The central source of tension and drama in the story. Conflict is sometimes referred to as the **story problem**.

Description: Verbal representation of characters, scene, or action, used to make the story more vivid for the reader.

Dialogue: The actual words that characters speak. Authors use dialogue skillfully in the short story to portray character and to dramatize conflict.

✓ **Diction:** The author's choice of words, the vocabulary level of the story.

8. ✓ **Dramatic irony:** A technique that increases suspense by letting readers know more about the dramatic situation than the characters know.

✓ **Exposition:** Background material about the characters, setting, and dramatic situation with which the author introduces the essentials of the story to the reader.

✓ **Falling action:** The part of the story, following the climax and leading to the resolution, in which there is a sharp decline in dramatic tension.

11. ✓ **Foreshadowing:** A writing technique that gives readers clues about events that will happen later in the story.

9. ✓ **Hyperbole:** An exaggerated statement used to make a strong effect.

10. ✓ **Imagery:** The use of selected details to describe one thing in terms of another. This helps suggest additional meanings and feelings.

✓ **Irony:** A particular tone created when the speaker intends a meaning that is opposite to the words he or she says.

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